



Play it Safe: Program Overview¹

University of Vermont Extension System Farm Safety Program

Situation: Many times youth can learn or develop safe habits that not only last a lifetime, but may be more effective in teaching their parents than another adult would be. While few youth live on farms today, most have visited them, and all live in rural settings which have hazards which need to be identified.

Objectives:

- Teach youth how to identify and avoid rural and farm safety hazards found near their home.
- Teach youth a few basic safety rules to follow when on the farm.

Scope: Play It Safe is being piloted in northwestern and central VT, covering the schools serviced by the following hospitals: Medical Center Hospital of Vermont, Fanny Allen Hospital, Northwestern Medical Center, North Country Hospital, Copley Hospital, Central Vermont Medical Center, and Porter Hospital.

Audience: Students in grades 5 and 6.

Program: The program was created when the Extension Farm Safety Volunteer Coordinator asked Medical Center Hospital of Vermont (MCHV) how the two groups might work together on farm safety. A committee was formed and Play It Safe was born. A team of 3 people - an emergency care professional, an Extension safety specialist, and a peer educator (actual farm accident victim or family member) - presents a one class period (45 minutes or so) program. This consists of a slide show by the Extension representative, a brief discussion of what it is like to be a patient by the emergency care person, and a real-life story of "what happened to me" by the peer educator, followed by 5-10 minutes for open discussion and questions.

Teachers are provided with a resource packed ahead of time consisting of various references, masters for activity/worksheets, masters and directions for a Pre/Post test for the students, masters for a take-home safety checklist for each student to complete with their parents and a letter of explanation for both teacher and parents.

The Play It Safe slide show, which lasts about 15-20 minutes, was developed by the planning committee and consists of a script and 62 slides.

Teachers and students are provided with free earplugs.

Content: Specific hazards identified and safe steps recommended include:

- One seat/one rider for all types of tractors, riding mowers, ATV's, etc.
- Loud motors like chainsaws, mowers, etc., require ear plugs.
- PTO's are not play areas.
- ATV's require personal protective equipment.
- Slopes deserve extra care.
- All moving parts must be shielded.
- Don't allow anyone to play near a work site.
- Younger siblings need watching - Take responsibility.
- Farm animals are not pets, don't pet without permission.

1. This document is produced by the University of Vermont Extension System Farm Safety Program. RR1 Box 2280, Morrisville, Vermont 05661. Phone: (802) 888-4972. Fax: (802) 888-2432.

- Fences can shock or cut - stay clear.
- Wounds can get infected. Keep them clean and covered.
- Sloppy yards/work sites increase risks, keep it tidy.
- Cleaners and chemicals can poison - lock them up.